United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea SPLOS/270

Meeting of States Parties

Distr.: General
14 April 2014

Original: English

Twenty-fourth Meeting
New York, 9-13 June 2014

Letter dated 14 April 2014 from the Chair of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf addressed to the President of the twenty-fourth Meeting of States Parties

1. I wish to inform you, in my capacity as Chair of the Commission, about the progress of work of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf since the twenty-third Meeting of States Parties, held in June 2013.

2. I wish to recall that, since June 2013, the Commission held its thirty-second, thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions at United Nations Headquarters, from 15 July to 30 August 2013, from 7 October to 22 November 2013 without plenary meetings, and from 27 January to 14 March 2014, respectively. The present letter contains the main developments in the progress of work of the Commission during those sessions. Additional details are included in the Statements by the Chair on the progress in the work of the Commission contained in documents CLCS/80, CLCS/81 and CLCS/83.

Establishment of new subcommissions

3. The Commission has continued considering submissions as queued in the order in which they were received.

4. During the three sessions held since the twenty-third Meeting of States Parties, overall, the Commission decided to establish subcommissions for consideration of the submissions made by Pakistan; Norway, in respect of Bouvetøya and Dronning Maud Land; South Africa, in respect of the mainland of the territory of the Republic of South Africa; Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands concerning the Ontong Java Plateau; France and South Africa in the area of the Crozet Archipelago and Prince Edward Islands; and Mauritius in the region of Rodrigues Island.

5. With respect to other submissions next in line for consideration as queued in the order in which they were received, the Commission recalled the decisions taken at earlier sessions to defer their further consideration and that of relevant communications, until such time as those submissions were next in line for

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consideration.[1] The Commission noted that for these submissions there had been no developments to indicate that consent existed on the part of all States concerned which would allow for their consideration, and decided to defer further the establishment of a subcommission. Overall, this applied to the submissions made by Myanmar; Yemen; the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in respect of the Hatton Rockall Area; Ireland, in respect of Hatton-Rockall Area; Fiji; and Malaysia and Viet Nam in the southern part of the South China Sea.

6. With regard to the submission made by Kenya, the Commission recalled the decision taken at its twenty-fourth session to revert to the consideration of the submission at the plenary level at the time when the submission was next in line for consideration.[2] In this connection, the Commission took note of the communications received since the twenty-fourth session, namely the communication from Kenya, dated 29 October 2013, and two communications from Somalia, dated 10 October 2009 and 4 February 2014. In the light of the two latter communications, the Commission determined that, notwithstanding its decision taken at its twenty-fourth session that the submission would be addressed by way of a subcommission to be established at a future session,[2] the Commission was not in a position to proceed with the establishment of a subcommission at that time. The Commission took this decision in order to take into consideration any further developments that might occur throughout the intervening period during which States may wish to take advantage of the avenues available to them, including provisional arrangements of a practical nature provided for in annex I to its rules of procedure (CLCS/40/Rev.1).

7. With regard to all the submissions for which the establishment of a subcommission was deferred to a future session, the Commission decided that, since those submissions remained next in line for consideration, it would review the situation at the time of establishment of its next subcommission (see also CLCS/76, paras. 22-24).

Consideration of submissions and adoption of recommendations

8. During the three sessions held since the twenty-third Meeting of States Parties, the Commission heard presentations on the partial revised submission made by the Russian Federation, in respect of the Okhotsk Sea; the submission by Pakistan; the joint submission by France and South Africa in respect of the area of the Crozet Archipelago and the Prince Edward Islands; the submission by France in respect of La Réunion Island and Saint-Paul and Amsterdam Islands; the joint submission of Tuvalu, France and New Zealand (Tokelau) in respect of the area of the Robbie Ridge; the submission by China in respect of part of the East China Sea; the submission by Kiribati; the partial submission by the Republic of Korea; the submission by Nicaragua with respect to the south-western part of the Caribbean Sea, and the submission made by the Federated States of Micronesia in respect of the Eauripik Rise.

9. During those sessions, the Commission and its subcommissions considered the submissions made by the Russian Federation in respect of the Okhotsk Sea; Uruguay; the Cook Islands in respect of the Manihiki Plateau; Argentina; Ghana; Iceland in respect of the Ægir Basin area and the western and southern parts of

[1] See CLCS/64, para. 92.

[2] See CLCS/64, para. 97.

Reykjanes Ridge; Denmark in respect of the area north of the Faroe Islands; Pakistan; Norway in respect of Bouvetøya and Dronning Maud Land; and South Africa in respect of the mainland of the territory of the Republic of South Africa.

10. During the reporting period, the Commission adopted recommendations with respect to the partial revised submission made by the Russian Federation in respect of the Sea of Okhotsk and the partial submission by Denmark in respect of the area north of the Faroe Islands. It also commenced its consideration of recommendations with respect to the partial submission made by Iceland in respect of the Ægir Basin area and the western and southern parts of Reykjanes Ridge and the submission made by Ghana. It decided to defer further consideration of these recommendations to the thirty-fifth session, in accordance with rule 53, paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure.

11. Finally, the Commission took note of the new submissions made by Denmark, in respect of the North-Eastern Continental Shelf of Greenland, on 26 November 2013; by Angola on 6 December 2013; by Canada, in respect of the Atlantic Ocean, on 6 December 2013; and by the Bahamas on 6 February 2014. The presentation of these submissions will be included in the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the Commission.

Conditions of service of the Commission

12. At its thirty-second session, the Commission welcomed the establishment by the twenty-third Meeting of States Parties of the open-ended working group on the conditions of service of the members of the Commission (see SPLOS/259, para. 26, and SPLOS/263, sect. VI.B). At the same session, a meeting was held between the Bureau of the Commission[3] and the coordinators of the open-ended working group, Tomas H. Heidar (Iceland) and James Ndiragu Waweru (Kenya). During the meeting, the Chair of the ad hoc working group appointed by the Commission to address issues relating to its workload (see CLCS/76, para. 17), Galo Carrera, delivered a presentation.

13. In his presentation, Mr. Carrera outlined the history of interactions between the Commission and the Meeting of States Parties and described the current workload and the conditions of service of the members of the Commission. He emphasized that the Commission considered that the open-ended working group should not restrict itself to the issue of medical and dental insurance coverage for members and, in that regard, that a distinction should not be made between members of the Commission from developing and developed States. In addition, it was noted in the presentation that the obligation of States parties to defray the expenses of nominated experts, as provided in article 2, paragraph 5, of annex II to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ("the Convention"), was interpreted differently by States parties and that, therefore, the financial assistance received by the members of the Commission varied significantly, depending on the interpretation.

14. In response to the request of the coordinators of the open-ended working group for additional information, the Commission conducted an internal survey of the working conditions of its members. Having reviewed the results of the survey, it requested that they be transmitted by the Chair to the coordinators and to the

[3] The Bureau is composed of the Chair of the Commission and the four Vice-Chairs (see CLCS/76, paras. 7 and 9).

Meeting of States Parties (see annex). In that regard, the Commission emphasized that the results of the survey could not reflect issues related to the conditions of service of former members of the Commission. The results were also impacted by the fact that several of the members of the Commission had served for only a limited time. The Commission agreed that one of its members would make a presentation on the results of the survey to the open-ended working group. The presentation was made at a meeting of the open-ended working group held on 4 October 2013.

15. During the thirty-fourth session, the Commission took note of relevant parts of General Assembly resolution 68/70, in particular those concerning the obligation under the Convention of States whose experts are serving on the Commission, to defray the expenses of the experts they have nominated while they are performing Commission duties, and provide medical coverage for them. In this connection, the Commission also noted that the interpretation of nominating States as to the breadth and scope of those expenses varied considerably, particularly as it concerned their medical coverage. The Commission also recalled that, in the past, the Meeting of States Parties had adopted decisions to overcome potential obstacles to the efficient implementation of the Convention (e.g., SPLOS/72, decision (a), and SPLOS/183, para. 1).

16. On the margins of the thirty-fourth session of the Commission, an informal meeting was held between the coordinators of the open-ended working group established by the Meeting of States Parties on the conditions of service of the Commission and the Bureau of the Commission.

17. At the same session, having reiterated its long-standing views as reflected in the history of exchanges held between the Commission and the Meeting of States Parties most recently summarized in the presentations made by the Commission on 5 April 2011, 26 February 2013 and 4 October 2013 on this issue, the Commission underscored that, as a matter of urgency, the full list of issues related to the conditions of service, namely, health insurance for all members, attendance, financial considerations, and working conditions, should be addressed. These issues represent ongoing concerns affecting the working capacity and well-being of all members. In this connection, the Commission emphasized that the impact of these issues had increased in the recent years as a result of the fact that members of the Commission had been working under considerable pressure, having accepted the request made by the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention in document SPLOS/229 and decided to meet for 21 weeks per year.

18. In addition, the Commission also underscored that each of the above-mentioned challenges applied to all members, regardless of whether they had been nominated by developing or developed States.

19. The Commission also reiterated its view that the Division should continue to be provided with all the necessary resources, including technical services, equipment and material, to assist the Commission with the substantially increased workload. In addition, the Commission noted that, currently, plenary meetings with full translation and interpretation services could not be scheduled with respect to the sessions of the Commission held in October and November. This resulted in delays in the consideration of submissions by the full Commission and the adoption of recommendations, among other negative effects.

20. At its thirtieth session the Commission had decided to hold, during 2013, three sessions of seven weeks each, including plenary meetings, for a total of 21 weeks of meetings of the Commission and its subcommissions. In addition, the Commission decided to adopt a new working arrangement for its subcommissions, and established four new subcommissions, so that six subcommissions would actively consider submissions. At that same session, the Commission decided to keep those working arrangements under review (see CLCS/76, para. 16). At its thirty-second session, the Commission decided that, also in 2014, it would meet for 21 weeks. At its thirty-fourth session, it further increased its workload by deciding to establish new subcommissions, bringing to nine the total number of active subcommissions.

21. When the working arrangements of the Commission come under review, the Commission will necessarily also take into account the conditions of service of its members, as well as the measures taken by the Meeting of States Parties to address the whole range of issues relating to the workload of the Commission.

Attendance of members

22. I have been requested by the Commission, in accordance with rule 7, paragraph 4, of the rules of procedure, to bring the issue of the extended absence of two members of the Commission, namely Messrs. George Jaoshvili and Sivaramakrishnan Rajan, to the attention of the Meeting of States Parties.

23. In this regard, I wish to note that Mr. Jaoshvili did not attend the thirty-second and thirty-third sessions, and attended only one of the seven weeks of the thirty-fourth session. Mr. Rajan did not attend the thirty-second, thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions. In this regard, however, I wish to recall that, through a communication dated 19 February 2014, Mr. Rajan resigned from his position as member of the Commission.

24. I wish to emphasize that extended absences have a direct adverse impact on the discharge of the Commission's functions provided for in article 3 of annex II to the Convention. They also increase the workload of other members who have to substitute for absent colleagues. In addition, prolonged absences interfere with the required quorum within the subcommissions to which the absent member has been appointed. Lastly, prolonged absences hamper the effectiveness of Commission members who have also been appointed officers of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies.

25. For this reason, at the thirty-second session, the Commission determined that the absent members were no longer in a position to act as officers of the Commission and of its relevant subsidiary bodies. In that regard, it unanimously decided to apply rule 15 of the rules of procedure and to proceed, as appropriate, with their replacement. Among such replacements, after consultations, the Commission elected Ivan F. Glumov as Vice-Chair of the Commission to replace the absent Vice-Chair.

26. At the thirty-fourth session, the Commission took note of the information provided by the Chair about a meeting with the Permanent Representative of a nominating State. At that meeting, the Permanent Representative was apprised of the fact that the member nominated by that State had been unable to participate fully in the work of the Commission owing to an alleged lack of financial support and about the repercussions of such an absence on the work of the Commission.

Other matters

27. At its thirty-fourth session, the Commission observed that communications had been received from certain States concerning submissions, with a request to restrict the circulation of these communications to the members of the Commission. In this regard, the Commission noted the general interest of Member States of the United Nations, as well as States Parties to the Convention, in the transparency in the work of the Commission, and decided, except in relation to communications from submitting States transmitting confidential data and information, to encourage States not to restrict the circulation of their communications only to the members of the Commission to the extent possible.

28. I would like to reiterate, on behalf of all members of the Commission, our gratitude to the Meeting of States Parties for its continued support of our work. In particular, I wish to thank the Governments of China, Costa Rica, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Mexico and the Republic of Korea for their contributions to the Trust Fund for the purpose of defraying the cost of participation of the members of the Commission from developing States in the meetings of the Commission. I would like to appeal to other States to contribute to this Fund, with a view to enabling the Commission to continue tackling its challenging workload in a sustainable manner and with the participation of all its members. In this connection, I would like to emphasize the importance of the Trust Fund in the light of the new working arrangements adopted by the Commission after consideration of the request of the Meeting of States Parties. Without a sustained flow of contributions, the Trust Fund will not be able to assist eligible members in the context of 21 weeks of meetings per year on the part of the Commission and its subcommissions.

29. On behalf of the Commission, I would also like to express gratitude to the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea for the high standard of secretariat services it renders to the Commission.

30. I would like to request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the twenty-fourth Meeting of States Parties.

(*Signed*) Lawrence Folajimi **Awosika**
Chair of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

Annex

Survey for the information of the Coordinators of the Open-ended Working Group on the Conditions of Service of the Members of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

Summary

1. During its thirty-second session, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf conducted an internal survey on the conditions of service of its members. The survey was prepared in response to a request from the Coordinators of the Open-ended Working Group on the Conditions of Service of the Members of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf for additional information, including with regard to medical and dental insurance coverage for members of the Commission.

2. The survey was conducted in the form of a questionnaire that was completed by 19 individual members of the Commission (two members did not attend the thirty-second session). The present report summarizes the results of the survey, including the general comments made by individual members.

3. The Commission noted that the results of the survey reflect only the experience of the current members of the Commission and could not reflect issues related to the conditions of service of former members of the Commission. In addition, the results were impacted by the fact that the majority of the current members of the Commission have only served for a limited time; only five Commission members have served for 16 years. Furthermore, the survey does not attempt to predict the future needs of the members of the Commission for medical or dental assistance.

4. In terms of current composition, it is important to note that the average age of actual members of the Commission is over 60. The average age of members during the present five-year term of office (ending in June 2017) is close to 63. It is clear that attending meetings in New York for almost two and one-half years during a five-year period represents, for this particular age group, a significant health risk, compounded by the fact that Commission members are placed in a situation of important responsibility and associated stress.

Provision of medical insurance and sufficiency of coverage

5. With regard to medical insurance coverage, eight members indicated that their State party provided them with medical insurance coverage for the performance of their duties at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Among that group, two members indicated that the coverage was sufficient to address their medical expenses, five members responded that the coverage was not sufficient and one member did not respond. One member clarified that his insurance plan was capped at approximately $150,000 per year, which was sufficient for routine medical expenses but not for serious accidents or illnesses.

6. Eleven members indicated that their nominating State party did not provide them with medical insurance coverage. Nine of those members indicated that they

had purchased insurance coverage at their own expense for current or past sessions at an estimated cost of 100 to 2,250 United States dollars. All of those members also responded that they considered the coverage to be insufficient to address all medical expenses that may occur in the performance of their duties with the Commission.

7. With regard to medical needs, 7 out of 17 members responded that they needed medical assistance while in the performance of their duties at United Nations Headquarters. Of those, five indicated that they incurred out-of-pocket costs for which they did not receive any reimbursement, such as costs for medical treatment or to travel back to their home country. The range of out-of-pocket costs specified was between $500 and $50,000. One member indicated that reimbursement was being processed, while another member stated that he could not afford to arrange an appointment with a doctor.

8. A total of 6 out of 18 members indicated that they had faced health or medical issues while in the performance of duties in New York that they had been unable to address owing to lack of medical insurance. These issues included chronic high blood pressure, diabetes and eye problems.

9. In terms of general comments, some members described restrictions or conditions associated with their insurance coverage, such as being required to obtain approval before receiving any treatment, or the need to request reimbursement after paying for treatment up front. One member described a life-threatening medical issue that he was unable to treat in New York, owing to the lack of medical insurance coverage. Another member indicated that, since insurance was to be provided by his nominating State, he did not have medical insurance for most of the thirty-third session of the Commission and the coverage was limited to emergencies and repatriation. That member suggested that centralized insurance coverage could be synchronized with the work schedule of the Commission and the time spent in New York.

10. One member recalled the tragic death of a member of the Commission during a session of the Commission and asserted that, since that incident, the issue of health insurance and medical coverage for Commission members had not improved. This member noted that the total costs of medical care in the case of the deceased Commission member was over $400,000 dollars, which was eventually covered jointly by social insurance and the travel insurance company, but only after causing great distress to the late member's wife who was considering the need to sell their house to address these costs.

11. Some members expressed concern that, by attending Commission sessions in New York without proper insurance coverage, their personal well-being was being put at risk, and they stressed that the conditions of service had worsened now that the Commission sessions had increased to 21 weeks. The members expressed frustration at not being eligible to receive insurance coverage through the United Nations employees' health insurance or the plan for permanent mission staff and at the fact that members of the Commission did not have the same status as the members of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea or the members of certain organs of the International Seabed Authority.

12. One member suggested that all future nominees to the Commission should make proper insurance coverage a condition of their nomination. It was also

suggested that the costs for developing States to provide insurance coverage for members of the Commission should be covered by the trust fund.

Provision of dental insurance and sufficiency of coverage

13. With regard to dental insurance coverage, three members stated that their State party provided them with dental insurance coverage for the performance of their duties at United Nations Headquarters. Two of these members indicated that the coverage was sufficient to address all dental expenses that may occur while in the performance of these duties.

14. In comparison, 16 members indicated that their nominating State party did not provide them with dental insurance coverage. Of the 16 members, 2 stated that they had purchased dental insurance coverage at their own expense for current or past sessions, which was restricted to emergency or accidental situations, and/or was part of their medical insurance coverage and was not considered to be sufficient. Thirteen members indicated that they had not purchased any dental coverage at their own expense for current or past sessions, while one member responded that he already had comprehensive insurance coverage.

15. With regard to dental needs, 3 out of 17 members responded that they needed dental assistance while in the performance of their duties at United Nations Headquarters and incurred out-of-pocket costs, such as for dental treatment or for travel back to their home country, for which they did not receive any reimbursement. The out-of-pocket costs specified ranged from $100 to over $10,000.

16. Four out of 19 members indicated that they had faced dental issues while in the performance of their duties in New York that they were unable to solve due to lack of dental insurance, including regular inspection and maintenance, and a problem with a filling. One member indicated that he could not afford to see a dentist when he needed dental assistance.

17. In terms of general comments, one member described restrictions or conditions associated with his insurance coverage, such as being required to obtain approval before receiving any treatment, or needing to request reimbursement after paying for treatment up front. Another member explained that he could not find any reasonably-priced dental or medical insurance that covered dental treatment for travellers and that the only way to receive treatment was to go back to his home country. A third member indicated that he was simply not in a position to afford dental insurance coverage because it was not considered part of general health insurance.

Loss of income or benefits owing to attendance at sessions of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

18. Fourteen out of 18 members indicated that their attendance at sessions of the Commission in New York had caused them loss of income or loss of benefits. Seven of these members indicated that such loss of income or benefits had an adverse impact on their ability to effectively perform their duties in the Commission. One member qualified that his attendance could potentially cause loss of income or benefits but had not done so thus far, while another stated that he experienced only an indirect loss of income.

19. In terms of general comments, some members provided additional details on how their participation in the Commission caused them loss of income or loss of benefits, including loss of bonuses and holiday time. One member indicated that his annual income depended on documented time sheets and that his salary was expected to be lower because he spent over 40 per cent of the year in New York. Another member explained that long absences in New York affected his income, including bonuses and promotions, as well as benefits, since his benefits package depended on job classification, nature of employment and number of hours worked. A third member noted that, since his retirement, he received no salary from his Government for his service as a member of the Commission. In addition, he was unable to apply for certain jobs in the private sector that required a minimum number of hours of teaching. This member described his role as a member of the Commission as one of duty rather than salary.

20. Some members also described how their chances of career progression and promotion were affected due to extended periods of absence spent in New York. One member indicated that the long sessions in New York, together with additional preparatory work for upcoming sessions of the Commission, had led to job stagnation at lower pay levels and thus, loss of income. He also explained how being in New York for long periods of time put him at a disadvantage in terms of being aware of, and applying for, new jobs in his home country.

21. In terms of possible solutions, one member suggested that the existing trust fund should compensate members for loss of income. Another member indicated that any nominating State Party should be obligated to cover all potential losses of income.

Impact on career development due to attendance at sessions of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

22. Ten out of 15 members indicated that their attendance at sessions of the Commission had an adverse impact on their career development, including in terms of job promotion, competency and skill-building, attendance at scientific meetings and research projects and publication of academic papers. One member explained that his participation in the Commission affected his ability to engage in other duties, including as a chair of various committees in government and in the private sector. Another member indicated that being extensively involved in the work of the Commission did not allow him to develop a specialization. This member also noted restrictions on Commission members in terms of the ability to publish findings of the Commission or their experiences as a Commission member. A third member suggested that the time spent with the Commission should be considered important and should qualify members in terms of their eligibility for promotions.

23. One new member indicated that his institute continued to pay his salary while he was in New York and that it had expressed dissatisfaction due to his extended periods of absence. This member indicated that, after only one year, he had already experienced a negative impact from his participation as a member of the Commission, as he had not been accepted for a promotion due to his extended absences. He explained that he remained very concerned about future career opportunities and salary increases and noted that he may need to resign before the end of his term due to the financial consequences.

Adequacy of facilities and office space for performance of duties

24. Of 16 members, 8 indicated that the existing office space and amenities provided at the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea impacted their ability to perform their duties effectively, in particular, due to lack of privacy and lack of space for personal belongings. Some members stressed the need for dedicated individual office space to consider issues and to perform their work efficiently. Members noted the difficulties of working only in shared meeting space, which was inadequate for certain individual tasks, such as drafting, research and the review of scientific literature.

25. One member noted that he was provided with extra office space at the Permanent Mission to the United Nations of the nominating State, but, for reasons of security, he was unable to use his own computer, and so the arrangement was not useful. This member also noted difficulties in having enough time to complete his other work duties owing to the demands of the work of the Commission.

26. Some members also noted the need for practical amenities, such as access to telephones. One member suggested that it would be useful to have access to lockers to keep computers, bags and other materials for safekeeping. Another member noted difficulties arising from the long hours spent in relatively small meeting rooms with artificial lighting and loud noise levels. One member suggested that it would be useful for the coordinators to visit the Geographic Information System (GIS) Laboratories where the subcommissions conduct their work to get a better understanding of the current conditions of the facilities and office space faced by the members of the Commission.

Other issues

27. With regard to other issues, most respondents cited the issue of family visits, in particular, the need for individual members to pay the full expenses of visits by family members. Some members described their difficulty or inability to pay for visits from family members. The relatively high costs of living in New York were noted in this regard. One member indicated that the members of the Commission were required to make New York their second home, but without the benefits received by United Nations staff members. Another member noted that the support of a family member was important for his ability to attend sessions of the Commission. A third member explained that he experienced embarrassment and disappointment for not being able to obtain a visa for his son to visit him in the United States.

28. One member indicated that his Government's travel regulations covered the costs of airfare, accommodation and meals for the person on mission only and, therefore, all costs associated with family visits were incurred by him personally, including the costs to rent a bigger apartment in New York. This member noted that he spent more than $12,000 for two ten-day family visits. Members also noted the high costs associated with travelling to their home countries to attend private occasions, such as children's birthdays, graduations or wedding anniversaries, which had to be paid out-of-pocket.

29. One member described financial losses associated with the high cost of living for extended periods in New York, including the payment of high taxes. This

member wondered whether it was possible for members of the Commission to benefit from tax exemptions.

30. More generally, members stressed the great personal sacrifice involved in attended the sessions in New York each year for 21 weeks, which impacted their private and professional lives and for which they received very little recognition or compensation. One member described in detail the issue of workload as it related to the conditions of service of the Commission and noted the hard work and long hours, which were greater than what was imagined by States parties, as well as the stress associated with the serious nature of the duties of members of the Commission.